
Murphy Releases Report on Potentially Disastrous Impact of Washington Republican Spending Cuts on Connecticut Residents

As House Republicans begin to unveil their massive budget cuts in Washington, today Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) released his new report on the impact in Connecticut if Washington Republicans make drastic cuts to programs that fund home heating oil assistance, affordable housing, education, public safety, and other programs in cities and towns across the state.

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HARTFORD - As House Republicans begin to unveil their massive budget cuts in Washington, today Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) released his new report on the impact in Connecticut if Washington Republicans make drastic cuts to programs that fund home heating oil assistance, affordable housing, education, public safety, and other programs in cities and towns across the state. Murphy was joined by Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro (CT-3) and Connecticut providers of programs slated for cuts.

"Republicans in Washington are preparing to take a sledgehammer to the federal budget that could have a disastrous impact on Connecticut families and communities. Instead of making targeted cuts to wasteful spending, they plan to balance the budget by slashing education dollars, home heating assistance, affordable housing programs, and more. These cuts will stop our economic recovery in its tracks," said Murphy.

Recently, House Republicans have begun to release preliminary parameters for federal spending cuts, which could decimate Connecticut taxpayers' return on their federal taxes. If these cuts are approved, the state could lose out on millions in education dollars, police funding, affordable housing, heating resources, and more.

"The challenge in tackling our budget is not whether we address the deficit and spending or not. The question is where do we start. We should be ending tax subsidies and special interest waste, making all programs accountable and ending programs that do not work, and ending the tax breaks for the top two percent. But the new Republican majority's proposed budget recklessly cuts, without much regard to the impact on our economy, on the businesses that create jobs and on the people who are being responsible, doing the best for their families and educating for the future. This budget is terrible for our workforce and our economy, and it is even worse for our most vulnerable citizens. Our job is to get this budget back to common sense and mainstream priorities, and I look forward to working with Chris and the rest of our delegation to get this done," said DeLauro.

The new Republican majority in the House of Representatives wants to cut federal programs that are critically important to hard working Americans by potentially taking us back to the funding levels of Fiscal Year 2006 or 2008. This report outlines what the impact could be in Connecticut:

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Home heating assistance. The Republican plans could cut funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance program to Connecticut by as much as 39%, potentially resulting in more than 27,000 households going without heating assistance.

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Education support for kids with disabilities. Funding for special education through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act could be cut by 8% - the amount needed to provide services to more than 8,000 special needs students in Connecticut.

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Direct assistance to towns for schools. If the Republican plans are successful, Connecticut could lose more than 13% of their Title I education funding, potentially cutting extra academic support for more than 15,000 Connecticut students.

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Higher education grants. The maximum amount for federal Pell grants, which provide low-income students with needed funding for college, could be cut by more than 37%, or \$1,500, down from \$5,550 to \$4,050. With the cost of college tuition on rise, this could mean that fewer Connecticut students will be able further their education.

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Community programming support. A potential 10% cut to Community Services Block Grant funding could mean the elimination of summer youth development activities, or fewer senior center lunches for those in need, or reduced access to preschool and school readiness programs.

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Early childhood education. Potential funding cuts to early childhood education could impact the 30 Head Start centers in Connecticut serving over 8,000 kids.

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Affordable housing grants. Connecticut could see a 36% cut to affordable housing and hurt the state's ability to provide affordable housing in our current recession.

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Crime fighting funding. Funding for criminal justice programs under the Justice Assistance Grant program could be cut by as much as 66%, hindering local police departments.

Murphy's office worked with the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management and the Congressional Research Service and to compile how much funding was provided for each program nationally and for of Connecticut. Using this historical data, they assumed that each program would be similarly funded. However, until the federal spending bills are finalized, it is difficult to tell the exact impact for Connecticut for each program.

Murphy and DeLauro were joined by John Yruick, Executive Director of Connecticut Education Association; Leo Canty, American Federation of Teachers; Mackenzie Manning, a University of Hartford student; Jim Maloney, Head Start in Danbury; Pat Wrice, Operation Fuel; and State Rep. Toni Walker.

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